

Fact Sheet for **“Behavior That Accords with Sound Doctrine”**  
**Titus 2:1-15**

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Each of us know and have known people who have identified themselves as Christians, who have both inspired and encouraged us to a greater commitment to God. Unfortunately we all know and have known people who have identified themselves as Christians, who by their behavior make us ashamed to identify ourselves as Christians with them. The question we should be asking is, “Which kind of person am I?” Titus 2 is a passage that can help you answer that question.

**ESV Titus 2:1 ¶ But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.**

When we hear the word “doctrine” we may only think of the various divisions of ‘systematic theology’ (Theology proper – The doctrine of the character of God, Angelology – The doctrine of angels, Biblical theology – The doctrine of the bible, Christology – The doctrine of Christ, Ecclesiology – The doctrine of the church, Eschatology – The doctrine of the end times, Hamartiology – The doctrine of sin, Pneumatology – The doctrine of the Holy Spirit, Soteriology – The doctrine of salvation, Theological anthropology – The doctrine of the nature of humanity). If so we are in danger of reading this verse incorrectly. What would accord better with sound doctrine than a sound doctrinal statement? But this is *not* what Paul meant! The discipline of ‘systematic theology’ was developed in the 1800’s to clearly lay out the basic doctrines of Christianity. But Paul knew nothing of the discipline of ‘systematic theology.’ The word ‘doctrine’ in Titus 2:1 is literally the word ‘teaching.’ Paul was relating to Titus what accords with sound spiritual teaching. He defines that in the following verses. Those verses have nothing to do with a doctrinal statement or ‘systematic theology.’ They have everything to do with godly behavior. It is the behavior he describes in those verses that accords with sound spiritual teaching.

**<sup>2</sup> Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. <sup>3</sup> Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, <sup>4</sup> and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, <sup>5</sup> to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.**

**Older Men**

Sober-minded - *temperate* in the use of alcoholic beverages, *sober, clearheaded, self-controlled*  
Dignified - *honorable, of good character, worthy of respect*  
Self-controlled<sup>1</sup> - *having ability to curb desires and impulses so as to produce a measured and orderly life self-controlled, sensible*  
Sound in faith, in love – *agape*, in steadfastness - *endurance, steadfastness, perseverance* (see James 1:3).

**Older Women**

Reverent in behavior - *women who honor God in their conduct*  
Not slanderers - *The word for ‘slanderer’ is a specific name for Satan as the accuser (1 Peter 5:8).*  
Not slaves to much wine

**Young Women**

Older women are to teach younger women...  
To love their husbands - *a loving disposition of a wife toward her husband loving one's husband, affectionate*  
To love their children - *loving one's children, be loving as a mother, attentive to meeting the*

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<sup>1</sup> Paul would use some form of this word to describe older men (v. 2), older women (v. 4), young women (v. 5), and young men (v. 6).

*needs of a child*

To be self-controlled – *This is the same requirement as for older men.*

To be pure - *characterized by moral purity, free from sin*

To be working at home – *literally 'working at home', preoccupied with domestic affairs, busy at homemaking*

This one deserves some special attention. Paul also wrote related things to Timothy (1 Timothy 2:15; 5:14). Modern western society is moving towards regarding men and women as absolute equals. In some senses this is true. We both stand before God on equal footing as to what is required for salvation. In our society 'equal pay for equal work' makes perfect sense. But, no matter what our culture says, there are distinct differences between husbands and wives in God's perfect design. 1. Biblically husbands are to be the head of their homes. Is this absolute? No. What about those husbands who cannot lead in their homes due to critical health problems, like Alzheimer's or dementia? 2. It is only women who can bear and nurse children. This is a scientific fact, no matter what the liberal voices in our country may say. And in God's design it is both natural and honorable for a wife to choose to be a good homemaker. But does the Bible prohibit a wife from working or having an influential role outside the home? Not at all. Consider Deborah (Judges 4 & 5), the Proverbs 31 wife (Proverbs 31:10-31), Dorcas (Acts 9:36), Lydia (Acts 16:14), Pricilla (Acts 18:24-26), and Phoebe (Rom 16:1). Paul is not restricting here a young woman's role to only that of homemaker. But his comments fit the culture he wrote to.

To be submissive to their own husbands – See *1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:22; Colossians 3:18*

#### Young Men

**<sup>6</sup> Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. <sup>7</sup> Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, <sup>8</sup> and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.**

There is an indication here that Titus was a young man himself. Verses 6-8 are one sentence. The first word of verse 7 is literally 'showing'.

A model of good works... in teaching showing...

Integrity - *not subject to corruption, free from error*

Dignity - *serious and worthy conduct that earns reverence and respect*

Sound speech - *balanced and ordered, blameless, above criticism, beyond reproach*

**<sup>9</sup> Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, <sup>10</sup> not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.**

And here is Paul's reasoning...

**<sup>11</sup> ¶ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, <sup>13</sup> waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.**

**<sup>15</sup> ¶ Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.**

These are the behaviors that accord with sound doctrine. Put yourself in the shoes of people who know you. How do they view you? Do you make them ashamed at times to identify themselves as Christians with you?

Or do you both inspire and encourage others to a greater commitment to Christ by your behavior and attitudes?